

From: Howard Kim
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/24/02 7:29pm
Subject: The Microsoft Settlement

To Whom It May Concern:

I find the proposed settlement in the Microsoft Antitrust case to be not a settlement in the public interest. It pains me to see Microsoft abuse it's monopoly power, and claiming they are doing it for the advancement of technology and business, but in fact ruining the entire technology industry for me and those who are not blind to their abuses.

Without rehashing the evidence pointed out during the trial, Microsoft's monopoly position threatens to control the foundations of technology itself. Since Windows is a "required" operating system, and since it is a proprietary one at that, Microsoft is leveraging that desktop ubiquity to take over the internet as we know it with their .NET strategy. Using their Passport system gives the keys of identity to Microsoft, a corporation, serving their own bottom line, not the public interest. Other products and APIs are forced on people's computers because they dictate it as such. Those that conflict with Microsoft are shut out entirely. Their DirectX API for example essentially forces game and multimedia developers to depend on fundamental and yet proprietary Microsoft technology for their livelihood, and as such they are tied to the Windows platform.

The same will happen with other fundamental APIs like security and identity (Passport), web services (.NET), etc.

Even our great government is shackled by Microsoft's proprietary and closed products. Why should our tax dollars be spent on products which are controlled by a corporation, especially something as fundamental as computer software? Our public government should be advocating open source software and encourage their use since it serves the public interest, not the pockets of a monopoly. The remedies in the proposed settlement do not address open source development. Non-profit organizations such as the Apache group and communities of developers put out seemingly the few successful competitive products to break the Microsoft hegemony.

I believe the government should advocate more software development in the public interest, and as such remedy the settlement to stop Microsoft from abusing their monopoly power, and also provide mechanisms to foster further growth in open source development.

I hesitated in writing my opinion on this matter for a long time. Perhaps I was afraid of being "marked", but this is too important to remain silent. The Tunney act allows us, the public, to voice our opinions. If Microsoft is allowed to continue their abuse, our industry will stagnate and be under the total control of a corporation. Many make jokes about Microsoft as "Big Brother", but we approach that as a reality everyday. It makes me want to quit the technology industry - how discouraging is that?

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